



Natural Resources Conservation Service
6200 Jefferson NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109

News Release

June 28, 2006

Contact: Barbara Garrett, public affairs specialist
(505)761-4406

NRCS Announces EQIP Application Period

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – The FY2007 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) application period opens today and will continue until November 3, 2006, according to Norman Vigil, New Mexico's assistant state conservationist for programs for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). EQIP is a key program under the 2002 Farm Bill that provides cost-share funds to working farms and ranches for conservation improvements. Like all NRCS programs, participation is voluntary.

EQIP is typically used in New Mexico for irrigation system improvements that conserve water, and rangeland improvements such as brush management and development of water sources for livestock and wildlife. In FY2006 \$18.2 million was allocated in New Mexico through EQIP.

"EQIP provides incentive payments and cost-share funds to private livestock or agricultural producers to implement conservation practices," said Vigil. "It promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. And, it is extremely important for producers to note that the application deadline is early this year."

According to Vigil, the early deadline is a continuing effort to improve the funding process. The accelerated program cut-off dates will allow producers time to complete practices during the first years of their contracts. The earlier application deadline date will help accommodate field work in preparation for a project, to be done in the fall before winter weather sets in. Finally, the early date will allow producers to get to their project work in the spring rather than later in the summer when they are in the middle of the growing season.

"The accelerated process makes coming in to our field offices early to meet with the NRCS staff more important than ever," said Vigil. "I would personally encourage our farmers and ranchers to come in and visit with our staff now. We know that producers that get in early and have a good conservation plan, generally have a better chance of getting funded."

EQIP, like all NRCS programs, is a voluntary program that is intended to yield high quality, productive soils; clean and abundant water; healthy plant and animal communities; clean air; an adequate energy supply; and working farms and ranchlands.

For assistance in applying for EQIP visit your local NRCS Field Office today.

#

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer